

REMARKS

This amendment is responsive to the Final Office Action mailed on April 15, 2008 setting a three month shortened statutory period for response that expires on July 15, 2008. Claims 1-7 and 24-28 and new claims 44-47 are pending. Claims 1 and 24 have been amended. Prompt reconsideration is requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC 103

Claims 1-7, and 24-28 stand rejected as unpatentable over Harvey et al. in view of Maehiro. In the Office Action, the examiner asserts that Applicants failed to significantly narrow the scope of the claims. Claims 1 and 24 have again been amended to more narrowly and patentably distinguish over this combination of references. The examiner is respectfully requested to note that amended claim 1 requires the communications to be by exchange of selected words from a menu of predetermined words.

Harvey does not disclose or suggest an environment in which users communicate by an exchange of words selected from a menu of predetermined words. Further, the cited references do not suggest providing a unique code generated by a multi-user communication environment to a first user in the multi-user environment during an exchange of words from a menu of predetermined words as is claimed. Further, there is no suggestion in Harvey or Maehiro that such a unique code is transmitted by the first user to the at least one other user via a mode outside of the multi-user communication environment, and then initiating secure free form communication between the users upon the unique code being authenticated in the multi-user communication environment after the unique code is submitted to the multi-user communication environment by the at least one other user.

Claim 24 now is more narrowly directed to a multi-user environment, and that the unique code is generated by the communications environment during an exchange of words from a menu of predetermined words within the environment. This unique code is then transmitted to the first user, who then, via a mode outside of the environment, communicates the unique code,

that was provided by the environment, to another user, who then submits the code to the environment for authentication. Only then is free form communication established between the users. Support for the claim amendments may be found at least in paragraph [0041] of applicants' specification, and more generally from paragraph [0039] through [0041] and is clearly shown in Fig. 10.

New claims 44-47 are submitted for consideration. It is respectfully submitted that the method of initiating communications as now claimed in Applicants' independent claims 1, 24 and new claim 44 is clearly not shown in either Harvey et al. or Maehiro, or in any of the other references cited by the examiner but not applied. Accordingly, this rejection should now be withdrawn.

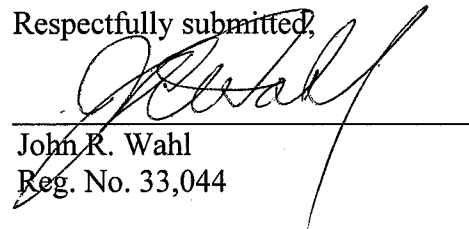
Claims 1-7, 24-28 and 44-48 now are pending in the application. This amendment is believed to be responsive to all points raised in the final Office Action. However, should matters remain which the Examiner believes could be resolved in a telephone interview, the Examiner is requested to telephone the Applicant's undersigned attorney at (303) 685-7460.

This response is filed within the three-month statutory shortened period for response and, therefore, no fees are believed to be due. However, the Director is authorized to charge any additional fee(s) or any underpayment of fee(s), or to credit any overpayments to **Deposit Account Number 50-2638**. Please ensure that Attorney Docket Number 054317-023301 is referred to when charging any payments or credits for this case.

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